

CIGNA Dental Covers Brush Biopsy



smile
You have so
many choices.

More *benefits*, more *choice* and more *satisfaction*

Early Detection and Proper Treatment Can Cure Oral Cancers

At CIGNA Dental, we share in the national concern for the early detection of oral cancer and stress the importance of preventive dentistry and early intervention in the disease management process.

Therefore, we are pleased to inform you that effective January 1, 2006, CIGNA Dental will cover brush biopsy for members who are enrolled in the CIGNA Dental Care (*Dental HMO), CIGNA Dental PPO (DPPO), or CIGNA Traditional (Dental Indemnity) plan.

Depending on your plan type, your co-payment or coinsurance amount will vary. Contact CIGNA Dental Customer Service for additional information.

Symptoms of Oral Cancer and Signs to Look For:^{1,2}

- Patches inside the mouth or on the lips that are white, a mixture of red and white, or red
- Patches that are white are the most common and sometimes become malignant
- Sore on the lip or in the mouth that won't heal
- Lump in the neck
- Earache
- Pain, tenderness, or numbness anywhere in the mouth or on the lips
- Difficulty chewing, swallowing, speaking or moving the jaw or tongue

Who is at Risk?

Oral cancer is the sixth deadliest cancer in America. Despite advances in surgical techniques, radiation treatments and chemotherapy, survival rates remain low when compared to other cancers.²

Annually, approximately 28,000 Americans are diagnosed with oral cancer.¹

While oral cancer most often occurs in those who use tobacco in any form, we also know that alcohol use combined with smoking greatly increases risk. But more than 25% of oral cancers occur in people who do not smoke and have no other risk factors.¹

Today, it's easier than ever to detect oral cancer.

What is Brush Biopsy?

Brush biopsy is a painless procedure which is used to gather [unusual] cells in mouth. The dentist uses a small brush to take a tissue specimen, which is then sent to a laboratory for analysis to determine the presence of pre-cancerous or cancerous cells.¹



¹ www.ada.org,
October 2005

² National Cancer
Institute, www.cancer.gov,
October 2005

³ [www.oralcancer
foundation.org](http://www.oralcancerfoundation.org)



YOU and YOUR Dentist – Oral Cancer Detection



Regular Check-ups Include Painless Oral Cancer exams

Your regular checkup is a good time for your dentist to check your entire mouth for signs of cancer. Regular checkups can detect the early stages of oral cancer or conditions that may lead to oral cancer. Ask your dentist about checking the tissues in your mouth as part of your routine exam.²

In about 10% of patients, the dentist may notice a flat, painless, white or red spot or a small sore. Although most of these are harmless, some are not. Harmful oral spots or sores often look identical to those that are harmless - testing can tell them apart.¹

An oral cancer exam is totally painless. Basically, it is a visual assessment of all the tissues in and around your mouth. Your dentist will examine the roof of your mouth, the insides of your cheeks, and the underside of your tongue. This simple screening is a vital step in protecting your oral and overall health.

To ensure that a spot or sore is not dangerous, your dentist may recommend a simple test, such as a brush biopsy, which can detect potentially dangerous cells when the disease is still at an early stage. Results may help determine the need for a surgical biopsy or other follow-up. The brush biopsy is approved for use in the United States.¹

Early Detection is the Key!

Remember to ask your dentist to perform an oral cancer evaluation during your next visit as well as every time you return for your regular dental check ups.

Oral Cancer Facts^{1,2,3}

- Approximately 28,000 new diagnoses of oral cancer occur each year in the United States.
- More than 8,000 deaths from oral cancer annually
- When detected late, oral cancer five-year survival rate is about 50%
- Oral Cancer is more likely to strike after age 40

¹ www.ada.org,
October 2005

² National Cancer Institute,
www.cancer.gov,
October 2005

³ [www.oralcancer
foundation.org](http://www.oralcancerfoundation.org)

“Dental HMO” is used to refer to product designs that may differ by state of residence of enrollee, including but not limited to, prepaid plans, managed care plans, and plans with open access features.

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